COVID-19 Temporary Measures
Southville and Bedminster
May 2020

Summary

On 9th May the Department for Transport issued a statement that Local authorities in areas with high levels of public transport use should take measures to reallocate road space to people walking and cycling. Bristol Cycling Campaign welcomes measures announced so far by Bristol City Council and the Department for Transport in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

This document provides a short list of measures that can be implemented in the Southville and Bedminster area to enable social distancing and enable cycling and walking as alternatives to private motor vehicles and public transport. These measures are a series of key ‘asks’ that can be implemented quickly and easily and we will propose more comprehensive solutions as the situation develops. Bristol Cycling Campaign are also working to assist Bristol City Council in developing city wide measures.

1.0 Proposals

These are a series of small scale interventions that could enable social distancing in key areas along North Street, and a series of road space reallocations and closures that can help enable safe cycling routes from Southville and Bedminster into the city centre for commuters.

Most shops and businesses have introduced social distancing measures which reduce the number of people in the premises or limit access into the premises entirely. This has led to queues forming on the footway outside the premises and this, in addition to people travelling along North Street has made maintaining social distance difficult in many busy areas.
The Department of Transport has encouraged local authorities to bring forward existing plans to address the issues raised above and all the proposals in this document are consistent with the recent WECA Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

### 1.1 North Street Shops (West)

The image below shows some key areas which have high levels of pedestrian traffic and queuing along the North Street shopping area at the west (Ashton Gate) end of North Street. Some footway build outs with cycle parking already exist and the suspension of parking along sections of this area would provide additional space for social distancing and additional cycle parking. It would also reduce the number of car movements into traffic along this stretch and improve safety of cyclists by reducing movements, car door conflicts and potentially slowing vehicle speeds by reducing carriageway widths.

![Fig. 1 - North Street - Exeter Road to Raleigh Road](image)

### 1.2 North Street (Greville Road to South Street)

Similarly, the image below shows some key areas which have high levels of pedestrian traffic and queuing along North Street between Greville Road and South Street. The Co-op and Tesco mini supermarkets and the ‘Owee’ burger takeaway restaurant cause significant queuing and the existing footway is very narrow in places. A reallocation of road space to provide a widened footway would enable adherence to social distancing measures. This area has a high level of illegal double yellow parking which would be prevented by measures to extend the footway.
1.3 North Street Shops (East)

The east end of North Street has very narrow pavements and while many of the businesses along this stretch have been closed during lockdown as they reopen it will be difficult for pedestrians to adhere to social distancing measures. There is also a high level of illegal double yellow parking and pavement parking along this stretch which is a hazard to pedestrians and cyclists. By suspending sections of parking the footway can be widened to a safer width to enable social distancing.
1.4 Dean Lane / Gaol Ferry Bridge

Dean Lane is an important cycle route on the ‘Malago Greenway’ route between the city centre and south Bristol. It is identified in the LCWIP as a route for improvement. We propose closing Dean Lane at the Coronation Road end to motor traffic which would have a number of important benefits.

Firstly, the current junction and crossing arrangement presents a risk to cyclists as cyclists have to cross the mouth of the junction to get to and from the cycle track that approaches the signalised crossing. This was not addressed in the recent signal renewal works.

Secondly, it would remove through traffic in front the Holy Cross Primary School on Dean Lane, where the double blind bend poses a risk to people travelling to school and also those crossing on route to Gaol Ferry Bridge via Acraman’s Road.

Thirdly, it would remove through traffic on a key cycling route and reduce motor traffic numbers sufficiently to make this an appropriate low traffic safe cycle route to south Bristol and into Southville via Stackpool Road.

Finally, it should be noted that this measure was effectively trialled from January to March 2020 as the end of Dean lane was closed for the Gaol Ferry crossing renewal works and did not result in a material difference to traffic on alternative routes.
1.5 Bedminster Bridge

Gaol Ferry bridge is already inadequate for the pedestrians and cycle flow over it, and Bristol Council traffic surveys have shown that there are around 1200 two way pedestrian movements and 400 cycle movements per hour during AM and PM peak in a very narrow space. Social distancing measures will exacerbate this problem as people return to work in the coming months. Bristol City Council have already proposed Bedminster Parade as a location for (as yet undisclosed) roadspace reallocation.

As such an alternative is required for cyclists travelling to and from south Bristol and the city centre. The Bedminster bridges each have 3 full traffic lanes in each direction in total. By reallocating one lane in each direction a safe space for cycling can be created in each direction.

Firstly, we propose the left turn lane from Bedminster Bridge to Commercial Road is reallocated as a protected cycle lane. The left turn junction is sufficiently wide to accommodate an extension of this lane through the corner while maintaining space for general motor traffic. This would have the effect of tightening the junction radius and reducing vehicle speeds.

In the longer run, it is important that this gyratory system, which currently presents one of the most significant obstructions for cyclists travelling over the New Cut, is made safe for cyclists.
Secondly, we propose the left turn lane from Bedminster Bridge to York Road is reallocated as a protected cycle lane and the left turn movement from the bridge to York Road is banned for motor traffic.

This would allow the creation of a safe cycle route from the north of the New Cut to the Filwood Quietway cycle route recently constructed on Whitehouse Street. It would also provide a connection from the Clarence Road protected cycle track to York Road and onwards to Victoria Park and Bedminster.

Motor traffic can freely flow on the north side of the river on Clarence Road, where there is already a protected cycleway. Access to properties is maintained from the Bath Road end.

Although this may seem like a significant intervention, the left turn lane in this location was closed for a significant period of time in 2017 for works associated with the Filwood Quietway, and Bristol City Council monitoring of the traffic flows did not show a significant effect on traffic flows in the surrounding area as this traffic movement replicates the movement from Bedminster Bridge gyratory to Bath Bridge via Clarence Road.

This would also cause a reduction in motor vehicles along York Road which allow safer passage of cyclists on to Totterdown via St Lukes Road.
1.6 Prince Street Bridge

Prince Street Bridge is one of the busiest pedestrian and cycle routes in Bristol and is congested at many periods throughout the day as pedestrian and cycle flow is directed onto the west side of the bridge. It is the most important pedestrian and cycle route across the floating harbour. This will pose increasing problems as people return to work in the coming months while we are still practicing social distancing measures.

A Bristol City Council traffic survey of Prince Street Bridge from July 2019 showed over 5000 two way cycle movements and 21,000 two way pedestrian movements in a 24 hour period, compared to less than 1500 car movements (one way permitted only), yet the largest lane on the Bridge is for motor vehicles.

By closing the bridge to motor traffic (emergency service vehicle access could be maintained) the east side of the bridge can be reallocated to cyclists and the west side of the bridge can be dedicated to pedestrians.

It is understood that Redcliffe Bascule Bridge is due to be closed for three months during 2021 and that Prince Street Bridge will be required for motor traffic access during this period. With this in mind, temporary measures can be introduced until this is required, and permanent changes to the infrastructure can be made after works have completed on the bascule bridge.
Fig. 7. - Prince Street Bridge